



NEWS

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EQIP ONE-TIME PAYMENT ADJUSTMENT

St. Paul, MN, Feb. 28, 2006 – A one-time payment adjustment may allow eligible Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) participants to complete conservation practices that have been delayed because of recent increases in energy prices, according to William Hunt, State Conservationist of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in St. Paul, Minnesota.

The assistance is part of USDA's effort to mitigate the impact of high energy costs on agricultural producers. "The adjustment should provide some economic relief to participants and encourage them to finish conservation practices to protect and benefit the environment," Hunt said.

The one-time adjustment will apply to participants who signed EQIP contracts in 2004 or earlier. Increase in payment amounts by 15 percent will apply to specific practices that have been most affected by spikes in the cost of concrete, steel, plastic pipe and other construction materials. The increase will only be paid for practices that are completed between March 1 and June 30, 2006 and will focus on specific practices that have escalated in price by 20 percent or more because of rising energy costs.

The following practices are included in this initiative: Waste Storage Facility and Waste Water and Feedlot Runoff Control System, Fence, Grade Stabilization Structure, Pipeline, Structure for Water Control and Compositing Facility. For a listing of additional practices, contact your local NRCS office.

Administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, EQIP is a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promote agricultural production and environmental quality. EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to participants who implement structural or management practices on agricultural land.

For more information on this one-time adjustment, go to the NRCS Website <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov> or visit your nearest USDA Service Center

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